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Poems

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I/We certify have followed the accepted standards of scientific, creative, and academic honesty and ethics.

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Poems by Amanda Nigon

Amanda Nigon's two poems (*see*) *Shell Cracked on Rocks by Gulls* and *Fistula* were written as part of a creative writing group using the theme of Losing Innocence.

LOSING INNOCENCE

Alison Broderson, Andrea Bruton, Eric Groonwald, Amy Herron, Eric Hoffeiser
Josephine Jarvis, Joe Loweth, Amanda Nigon, Jenny Sodomka (English)
Richard Robbins, Faculty Mentor (English)

This project was inspired by our group's desire to heighten its social awareness as it explored the loss of innocence resulting from impoverishment. As creative writers we chose to explore this theme through poetry, fiction, and creative non-fiction--our subjects ranging from working in a women's shelter to college life. Because the process of writing is one of investigation, we developed a deeper understanding of the loss of innocence and a broader interpretation of the meaning of impoverishment, choosing in advance to not limit ourselves to an economic interpretation of the word. We attained our goals through observation, discussion, information gathering, writing, and revision of creative work, meeting frequently to discuss our work and ideas. We strove to bring each individual piece to a publishable quality and plan to submit our works for publication. In the hopes that others will gain from our awareness, we plan to present our writing at the conference, individually reading our work to the audience.

Amanda Nigon

(see)Shell Cracked on Rocks by Gulls

The adult life leap; November voting, bowling with pull-tabs and
cigarettes, Eighteen. Dreaming of the ocean.

Unprepared for the earthquake
year of swollen fevers that raked the
brain, searing bulbous tissue fields
like a bacterial bath for thoughts.

One year: a revolution around the sun or;
Health like a car thrown from a sharp
curve, fever that pulled She from Me

while Ego left the plight-damaged scene,
left flowers stinking in well- health vases
while blood tests spoiled like reeking fish.

From root to flower the fever exploded in fire across pale flesh.

Her body, left with shortness of
breath, her brain inept at deftness,
permitted severance from sanity,
a cleaved separation of Ego and She.

Depression: mental leave
or rather, a neuron disconnection
notice, a (guinea pig test) child for swallowed
pills and life like eyes averted to the floor;

unaware of physicality,
at a loss for reality mentality sensuality,
loyalty lacking toward tomorrow, loyalty
lacking for the mold of today,

yesterday wet with a gelatin soul.

Amanda Nigon

Fistula

No water fell from the dry sky that summer.
The long white crane flew from plains of parched mud
like a jet crossing the hard ocean of a “third-world” country, cruising over a civilization
washing dishes in the bathwater river.

Here, father consults his round-bellied wives about a daughter slumped like a slinky
in the dust. No trust fund for
this bronze woman, no dowry from the gods except
the flow of red between her stork-thighs which brings monetary value to mind

for the polygamous family man, his girl a thirteen-year-old hen bred for laying eggs.
He binds her to the auction block
like livestock left to the shock of men fighting for her vise-tight hips and lips whipped to
submission.

Her black moon eyes stare as the bidder, four times her years
around the orange desert sun, buys her life, a bonus to his jangling liver-pouch. Life kicked sixth in
line behind other lives, behind wives
who survive to mind his writhing huts of children.

New to the grunt of a man and a swelling belly, this child-wife, woman at thirteen,
child-eyes with child, a She-dam built to crack down the seams, too tight to withstand a
man’s offspring,
but she hoped to raise his self esteem.

She hoped to mean something as his smallest wife, her life with him; a servant stumbling
heavy with birth that screamed for faith
when her son came ripping through the passageway of life, Merging from home
into her bodily flows,

leaving a hole filled with her child- mother blood, steaming and streaming
together as her prize was stolen from her dry lumps, gone to great sagging
humps,
far from the infectious butter flowing through his mother’s sex.

She weeps, a wound of woman to whom no doctor will attend, A childless child
with sizzled flesh,
fused canals leaking life sustenance,
While her mind puddles like shallow breath

rarely fresh these days, plagued with flies flown from cow flanks
as life drones
and child-wife sits alone by her crumbling thatched home,
her melancholy pain plays as she melts in the sunlit patch of hay.

Author Biography:

Amanda Nigon graduated from MSU-Mankato in Summer of 2004 with a bachelors degree in English creative writing and minors in Art and Humanities. She has been published in *SLAM* and *The Blue Earth Review*. After taking some time off to further develop her skills in writing, art, and music, she hopes to return to a university to pursue her MFA.

Faculty mentor biography:

Richard Robbins is Professor of English and Director of the Creative Writing Program. Dr. Robbins would like to give Tara Moghadam, graduate student in creative writing, all the credit for mentoring the students involved in the creative writing presentation.

Graduate student mentor biography:

Tara Moghadam received her MFA in Creative Writing from MSU-Mankato in Spring of 2004. She has taught creative writing and composition at MSU, as well as in the Mankato community. She is the current editor of *The Correspondent: A Fan Letter of Minnesota Authors* and a recipient of Prairie Lakes Individual Artists Grant 2003 and the 2004 Diane Glancy Poetry Award. Her poetry has been published in numerous journals and anthologies, including *The Southern Poetry Review*, *Kalliope*, and *Poetry Motel*.